

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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O R 291419Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2854

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1106

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ASEC, ET, US

SUBJ: FOUR STONINGS OF EMBASSY VEHICLES THIS

MORNING

REFS: ADDIS 1031, ADDIS 0829, ADDIS 0223

1. AT 1215 THIS MORNING MY CAR, FLYING THE AMERICAN FLAG, WAS STRUCK BY LARGE ROCK (ABOUT 4"X2"X2") THROWN BY ONE OF LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAD JUST LEFT THE TEFERI MAKONNEN SCHOOL NEAR THE EMBASSY COMPOUND. THE ROCK DISINTEGRATED MY DRIVER'S WINDOW AND PASSED JUST BEHIND HIS HEAD. HE AND I WERE COVERED WITH TINY GLASS FRAGMENTS BUT WERE NOT INJURED. THE INCIDENT OCCURRED ABOUT 100 YARDS DOWN THE STREET FROM THE AREA WHERE 6 PREVIOUS STONINGS HAVE RECENTLY TAKEN PLACE (REFTELS). I DID NOT SEE ANY POLICE BUT CANNOT BE SURE THERE WERE NONE IN THE AREA. THREE OTHER EMBASSY VEHICLES WERE SIMILARLY STONED, WITHOUT INJURIES, IN THE SAME GENERAL AREA WITHIN SEVERAL MINUTES OF THE FIRST INCIDENT. THE ABSENCE OF SERIOUS INJURIES IN THE 10 STONING INCIDENTS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IS LITTLE SHORT OF MIRACULOUS.

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2. UPON HEARING OF THE STONING, POL COUNSELOR IMMEDIATELY

CONTACTED MOFA'S AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, VICE MIN HAMID, AND INFORMED HIM OF WHAT HAD OCCURRED. POL COUNSELOR SAID THAT, AS HAMID AWARE, THIS SEVENTH INCIDENT OF ITS KIND AT SAME PLACE. HE NOTED THAT MATTER HAD TWICE BEEN RAISED WITH ACTING FONMIN ARAYA AND THAT ALL INCIDENTS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED FOLLOWING THEIR OCCURRENCE WITH MUNICIPAL POLICE COMMISSIONER. SIXTH INCIDENT HAD BEEN FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION WITH NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSIONER ON JANUARY 28.

IN EACH OF THESE CONVERSATIONS THE EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES THAT THE AUTHORITIES WOULD TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO PRECLUDE A RECURRENCE. POL COUNSELOR NOTED THAT EMBASSY HAD ALREADY CONVEYED IN PREVIOUS INSTANCES SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH IT VIEWED LACK OF CORRECTIVE MEASURES AND DANGER TO WHICH PROPERTY AND PERSONNEL OF THIS MISSION THUS BEING UNNECESSARILY EXPOSED. POL COUNSELOR GAVE IT AS HIS VIEW THAT MATTER REGRETTABLY HAD NOW BECOME SERIOUS ISSUE: "WHAT WOULD EFFECT HAVE BEEN UPON OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS HAD CHARGE' BEEN WOUNDED OR KILLED?"

3. POL COUNSELOR ASKED AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR INFORM HIGHEST AUTHORITIES OF SITUATION THAT HAD BEEN CREATED BY THESE STONINGS. HE SAID THAT FURTHER ASSURANCES, HOWEVER WELCOME, WOULD NOT RPT NOT OF THEMSELVES BE ADEQUATE UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY EFFECTIVE ACTION. THERE HAD BEEN MANY WITNESSES TO THE STONING OF THE CHARGE' CAR AND THE EMBASSY EXPECTED THE POLICE TO PROCEED PROMPTLY WITH AN INVESTIGATION; TO DETERMINE THE IDENTITY OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE; AND TO ARREST AND PROSECUTE THEM. THE EMBASSY WISHED TO BE INFORMED OF THE STEOPS BEING TAKEN BY THE AUTHORITIES TO AFFORT IT THE PROTECTION AND SECURITY TO WHICH IT WAS ENTITLED. POL COUNSELOR HAD NO DOUBT THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD SHARE THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE EMBASSY VIEWED THE REPEATED FAILURE OF THE AUTHORITIES TO ACT EFFECTIVELY IN DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM. HAMID UNDERTOOK TO CONVEY THESE VIEWS PROMPTLY TO THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED; EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING FOR THEM; OFFERED ONCE MORE TO DO EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO SEE THAT EFFECTIVE ACTION

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IS TAKEN. POL COUNSELOR CALLED HIM BACK 15 MINUTES LATER TO REPORT ON STONINGS EIGHT, NINE AND TEN.

4. RSO NOTIFIED BG BERHANE TEFFERRA, COMMISSIONER OF NATIONAL POLICE, LATE THIS MORNING OF THE LATEST STONING INCIDENTS, EMPHASIZING CONTINUING LACK OF ADEQUATE POLICE PROTECTION. RSO SUBSEQUENTLY MET WITH COLONEL YESHITILA, COMMISSIONER OF ADDIS ABABA POLICE.

IT WAS PUT STRONGLY TO YESHITILA THAT MORE POLICE OFFICERS ARE NEEDED IN THE VICINITY OF THE SCHOOL, AND THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ADDIS ABABA POLICE SHOULD VISIT THE SCHOOL OFFICIALLY AND INFORM THE STUDENTS IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT THE STONINGS MUST STOP. YESHITILA REMAINED NON-COMMITTAL REGARDING ANY ACTION. COLONEL YESHITILA AND COLONEL HILU, CHIEF OF CIVILIAN INVESTIGATION DIVISION, WILL HOLD AN ADDITIONAL MEETING WITH RSO THIS AFTERNOON.

5. I RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT DISCUSS THESE STONINGS IMMEDIATELY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE WODAJO IN THE STRONGEST TERMS. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH CONSIDER WHETHER TIME HAS COME WHEN REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO THE DIRECT LINKAGE BETWEEN THE SAFETY OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY HERE AND OUR ABILITY TO CARRY FORWARD OUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA.

6. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES I PLAN TO PLACE CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS IN MY FEBRUARY 1 MEETING WITH PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTE ON THE ISSUE OF SECURITY OF AMERICANS IN ETHIOPIA, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF TEFERI MAKONNEN SCHOOL. I INTEND TO SAY THAT THE EPMG BEARS CONSIDERABLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE STONING INCIDENTS IN MY OPINION BECAUSE IT (1) PERMITS THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MEDIA TO CARRY INFLAMMATORY ANTI-FOREIGN AND ANTI-AMERICAN ITEMS; (2) HAS NOT PROVIDED ADEQUATE POLICE PROTECTION; AND (3) HAS MADE LITTLE IF ANY EFFORT TO DATE TO APPREHEND THE STONE-THROWING STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL AND NONE AT ALL TO INFORM THE STUDENT BODY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DISAPPROVAL OF SUCH ACTIONS. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SUGGEST, UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT HAS OBJECTIONS, THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE SAFETY OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY BY PLACING FAVORABLE

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EDITORIAL COMMENT ON US AID PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA IN THE PRESS, RADIO AND TELEVISION AT AN EARLY DATE. IN CONTRAST, A NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY ARTICLE IN TODAY'S ETHIOPIAN HERALD CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE: "ONE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT THE SOVIET UNION GRANTS THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DEVELOPING STATES ON THE ACCOUNT OF ITS NATIONAL WEALTH CREATED BY THE WORKING PEOPLE, WHEREAS THE LOANS AND CREDITS OF THE IMPERIALISTS, JUST AS THEIR ENTIRE SO-CALLED PROGRAMME OF AID TO ASIAN, AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, IS BUT A SMALL SHARE OF WHAT THEY HAVE PLUNDERED IN THESE COUNTRIES AND UTILISED BY THE IMPERIALISTS FOR THE FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF THEIR POSITIONS."
WYMAN

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